

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE STUDY

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21 April 1980

In selecting candidates for its award for the best book in 1979 by an American on American intelligence, NISC found itself faced with a difficult problem. A need was felt to recognize both scholarly contributions to the historical literature of intelligence and journalistic contributions to public understanding of contemporary developments in the field of intelligence. The difficulty was resolved by choosing a leading representative of each category as equally meritorious. The alternative of awarding no prize at all seemed inappropriate. This procedure will be continued by NISC in the future, save when some outstanding work comes to hand which clearly deserves to win in both categories.

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Powers, Thomas, The Man Who Kept the Secrets, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1979, 393 pp.

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In the opinion of a majority of the selection committee members, Mr. Powers has produced the most informative general treatment of the development of U.S. intelligence at the national level up to the present time. Using the career of Richard Helms, a former director of the CIA, as a thread of continuity, he has traced major events and personal interrelationships in the development of the CIA, setting forth a picture of its role in support of government policy-making that is, at once, sympathetic and lacking in either the condemnatory or the apologetic extremes characteristic of so much writing by detractors and supporters of the intelligence community in recent years. The fact that he began his task with a negative prejudice toward the CIA and ended with an at least neutral view plus a clear awareness of the need for a strong national intelligence effort speaks

well for his fairness of mind and desire for objectivity. While one may still fault him for a somewhat two-dimensional treatment of his central character and the largely episodic nature of the work, as well as for numerous errors of fact and a tendency to linger over-long on some of the more sensational aspects of the story, he has, on the whole, produced a fairly balanced treatment of his subject matter. It should contribute significantly to public awareness of the difficulties of carrying out intelligence activities on an international scale in a hostile world while attempting to preserve the integrity of democratic traditions. For his commendable effort of journalistic enterprise, analytical skill, and clarity of exposition, NISC is pleased to present Mr. Powers with its award of \$500 in the category of best book by an American on the contemporary American intelligence scene in 1979.

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Weber, Ralph E., United States Diplomatic Codes and Ciphers 1775-1938, Chicago, Illinois, Precedent Publishing, Inc., 1979, 633 pp.

In the unanimous opinion of the selection committee, Professor Weber has produced an outstanding work of scholarship in the field of communications security as related to American diplomacy in the period from the earliest days of the republic until just prior to World War II. As the first basic reference work in this highly specialized field, it will be of lasting value to both diplomatic historians and to cryptologists. This treatment of U.S. codes and ciphers and their effectiveness in guarding the security of U.S. diplomatic communications has the added advantage of revealing certain heretofore unknown points of history in the field of diplomacy and should encourage others to pursue this arcane field of investigation. By skillfully relating the messages presented to the history of the periods involved, Professor Weber has transformed what might otherwise have been a dry treatise of concern only to scholars into a compelling story to be read by anyone interested in period American diplomatic history. While undoubtedly this work is very specialized in nature, the fact that political intelligence during most of the period treated was essentially human-source-derived intelligence, or humint, as opposed to intelligence derived from the multiplicity of sources and methods that have become available in more recent times, gives the work a much broader intelligence significance for the periods covered than might at first appear to be the case. For this commendable effort of scholarly research, embodying both analytical skill and a highly readable exposition, to say nothing of the author's physical endurance in years of cryptologic research, NISC is pleased to present Professor Weber with its award of \$500 in the category of best book by an American author making a contribution to the scholarly literature on the history of American intelligence in 1979.

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Warner, Edwin, "Strengthening the CIA," Time, April 30, 1979

In the unanimous opinion of the selection committee, Mr. Warner has produced an outstanding news editorial on the current state of American national intelligence and, in particular, of the CIA. In a concise treatment that is both broad in scope and objective in tone, he points out the pressing need to begin to rebuild the national intelligence capability of the United States in order to be able, once again, to cope effectively with the seemingly unending series of international crises with which we are faced. He points out the need to move ahead to meet new challenges, while not losing sight of the lessons learned from past difficulties. He focuses on the great need to develop workable oversight legislation, which will serve to minimize the chance of recurrence of past abuses, while still permitting effective action in the face of hostile challenges. Moreover, he takes special note of the unworkability of the present Freedom of Information Act, which ties up so much valuable personnel time while potentially leading to a significant loss of security of information, to say nothing of the attendant loss of confidence on the part of friendly intelligence services abroad. For this commendable effort of journalistic opinion moulding, NISC is pleased to present Mr. Warner with its award of \$500 in the category of best news writing of an informative or editorial nature by an American on the contemporary American intelligence scene in 1979.

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Brugioni, Dino A. and Poirier, Robert G., "The Holocaust Revisited: A Retrospective Analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Complex," American Intelligence Journal, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 1979, pp. 22-40.

In the unanimous opinion of the selection committee, Messrs. Brugioni and Poirier have produced an outstanding journal article on the subject of a reexamination and reinterpretation of World War II aerial photographic film to provide first-hand evidence of the nature of the most notorious Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz in Poland. Systematic study of World War II film from the National Archives, using a search strategy based on a knowledge of the manner in which target film was handled at that time, led to an examination for the first time of frames of film which had been ignored as irrelevant when photographing the IG Farben factory adjacent to Auschwitz. Sure enough, there in the developed but unprinted (and until now unexamined) film was direct evidence of the nature of the Auschwitz and nearby Birkenau concentration camps. Using special image enhancement techniques developed since World War II, it was possible to discern much detail, such as lines of inmates and some of the grisly paraphernalia of extermination. This remarkable paper, in itself somewhat unusual to be found in the highly

classified technical area of photographic interpretation, has had tremendous impact in the short period since its publication. In addition to receiving wide distribution, a special copy has been presented by President Carter to the Holocaust Museum in Israel. It is a clear example of what modern photographic intelligence research can accomplish and makes a significant contribution to public understanding of the capabilities of imagery intelligence rivalling the U2 photography displayed during the Cuban missile crisis. For this commendable effort in the reporting of an outstanding achievement in photographic interpretation, NISC is pleased to present Messrs. Brugioni and Poirier with a joint award of \$500 in the category of best journal article by an American author on an American intelligence topic in 1979.

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Attanasio, Mark L., "Failures in Covert Operations -- U.S. Involvement in Chile," pp. 1-54 of Monograph on National Security Affairs, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, October 1979, 129 pp.

In the unanimous opinion of the selection committee, Mr. Attanasio has produced a very competent research paper on the subject of U.S. intelligence failures in Chile at the time of the overthrow of Allende. It is both a thoughtful and a well-researched treatment which proceeds systematically from the historical background of U.S. involvement through consideration of the role of the policymaker in what went wrong to examination of the effects of covert operations failures on the image of the U.S. in the world. Finally, it suggests what can be done to avoid such failures in the future. Relying heavily on the official report of the U.S. Senate hearings on the Chile operation, and drawing on a variety of supplemental book and journal sources, it collates and surveys informed opinion on these questions. Aside from inclusion of some obviously biased sources without critical comment, the treatment is both rational and realistic; it quite correctly focuses on the need in the future to decide on just where covert action can be used effectively and where it may be inappropriate because of the nature or the magnitude of the effect that is to be achieved. It further focuses on the need for some internal mechanism within the CIA (i.e., an inspector general function) for guarding against the undertaking of patently impossible tasks merely to accommodate the wishes of policymakers. In recognition of the merit of this paper and to encourage other efforts of a similar nature, NISC is pleased to present Mr. Attanasio with a special award of \$250 in the category of best student paper by an American on an American intelligence topic in 1979.

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Prepared by Col. Russell J. Bowen

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

ANNUAL AWARDS FOR "INTELLIGENT WRITING ON INTELLIGENCE"

April 21, 1980

BOOK AWARDS:

1. Thomas Powers. The Man Who Kept the Secrets.
Richard Helms and the CIA. Alfred A. Knopf, New York,
1979.

A journalistic, popular book on the history and personalities of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from 1950 to 1972, focusing primarily on Richard Helms. It is probably the most comprehensive book of its kind although it contains some errors of fact and flaws in interpretation. It is being widely read and will improve understanding of many aspects of the role of intelligence in the United States government. Although Mr. Powers plainly started with and reflected in his book a number of prejudices against the whole concept of secrecy and espionage, he interviewed former CIA officers extensively and has captured some of their feeling about the urgency of maintaining an effective secret intelligence system.

2. Ralph E. Weber. U.S. Diplomatic Codes and Ciphers, 1775 to 1938. Precedent Publishing, Inc., Chicago, 1979.

A serious, scholarly work presenting the results of many years of research into the American diplomatic codes and ciphers as developed and used by U.S. diplomats and agents for the protection of their communication. Its emphasis is on early American history. It establishes the importance of our new republic attached to secrecy and intelligence in the conduct of diplomacy. This is the first work of its kind to be published by an American scholar. Professor Weber teaches American diplomatic history at Marquette University.

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AWARD FOR A SCHOLARLY ARTICLE:

3. Dino Brugioni and Robert G. Poirier. "The Holocaust Revisited, a retrospective analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination complex." National Military Intelligence Association, Inc., American Intelligence Journal, Vol. II, No. 1, Spring 1979.

The authors did this as a personal, unofficial examination of what could be learned from aerial photography of World War II with the benefit of present-day photo-interpretation techniques and equipment. What they discovered was released by the CIA in a brochure that became a page-one story in The New York Times and The Washington Post.

AWARD FOR A JOURNALISTIC ARTICLE:

5. Edwin Warner. "Strengthening the CIA." Time, April 30, 1979.

This article surveys the present state of the CIA and the American intelligence community, underlining the need for a strong intelligence service. It deplores some of the constraints that have resulted from the few transgressions that have occurred in the past. It is an excellent, authoritative summary of the state of affairs in U.S. intelligence at the end of the 1970s, a critical time in our history.

AWARD FOR AN ARTICLE WRITTEN BY A STUDENT:

6. Mark L. Attanasio. "Failure in Covert Operations--U.S. Involvement in Chile."

This is a monograph on national security affairs published by Brown University while Mr. Attanasio was a student in that institution. It is being awarded a special prize because it is an unusually thorough and analytical study produced in the course of regular academic work at a university.

A WORD ABOUT THE AUTHORS

THOMAS POWERS won a Pulitzer Prize in 1971 for his reporting on the case of the young Weatherman terrorist Diana Oughton. He is the author of several books, including Diana: The Making of a Terrorist, and The War at Home.

RALPH E. WEBER is a Professor of History at Marquette University. He received his B.A. from St. John's University and his M.S. and Ph. D. from the University of Notre Dame. Professor Weber is the author of three books, and the editor of another three. He has written numerous articles including several on American history.

DINO BRUGIONI is a senior official and aerial reconnaissance expert for the Central Intelligence Agency. He joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1948 and was a founding officer of the National Photographic Interpretation Center. Mr. Brugioni has written extensively on the use of aerial photography and has twice been the recipient of the Agency's Sherman Kent Award for outstanding contributions to the literature of intelligence. He holds a B.S. and M.A. degree from George Washington University.

ROBERT POIRIER joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1975 after serving in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1969 and teaching high school in New York state for four years. He holds a B.A. degree from Norwich University and an M.A. from the University of Massachusetts (Amherst). He has served as an imagery analyst at the National Photographic Interpretation Center for the last four years. He also was the recipient of the Sherman Kent Award for outstanding contributions to the literature of intelligence.

EDWIN WARNER has been with Time since 1958. He has contributed to both the press section and the "Nation" section of the magazine. In addition, he has written most of Time's stories on New York's fiscal crisis and several on youth crime. He received an American Bar Association award for his cover story on the Bakke decision. Mr. Warner has contributed essays and book reviews on political and historical subjects. He holds a degree from Amherst College.

MARK ATTANASIO graduated Magna Cum Laude from Brown University in June 1979. He is currently attending Columbia University School of Law.